

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) for the BE-185 Quarterly Survey
of Financial Services Transactions Between U.S. Financial
Services Providers and Foreign Persons**

- 1) What is the threshold for having to file the BE-185?

Completion of a BE-185 survey is required of any U.S. financial services provider that had

- a. receipts from unaffiliated and affiliated foreign persons in all financial services combined that exceeded \$20 million in the previous fiscal year or that are expected to exceed that amount in the current fiscal year; or*
- b. payments to unaffiliated and affiliated foreign persons in all financial services combined that exceeded \$15 million for the previous fiscal year or that are expected to exceed that amount in the current fiscal year.*

- 2) When is the BE-185 survey due?

A completed form is due within 45 days after the close of each fiscal quarter, except for the fourth quarter of the respondent's fiscal year when the report is due within 90 days of the close of the quarter.

- 3) How do I obtain another copy of the BE-185 survey or additional overflow sheets?

- a. Call (202) 606-5588 to request the survey.*
- b. Go to <http://www.bea.gov/surveys/pdf/be185.pdf> to download a copy of the survey.*
- c. Send an email to be-185@bea.gov for an .xls version of the BE-185.*

- 4) How do I request a filing extension for the BE-185?

A written request for an extension will be considered if it is received at least 15 days before the due date. BEA will provide a written response to such a request. Requests for extensions may also be sent via e-mail to BE-185extension@bea.gov.

- 5) Why did I receive the BE-185 survey?

Either you filed in the past, or we believe that you may have had transactions covered by this survey.

- 6) Why do I need to complete the BE-185?

This survey is authorized by the International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act and the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988. U.S. financial services providers that receive this survey, or that have transactions covered by the survey with affiliated or unaffiliated foreign persons are required to complete and return the survey to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Data reported on this survey are confidential and may be used only for analytical or statistical purposes. Without your prior written permission, the information filed on the survey cannot be presented in a manner that allows it to be individually identified. Your survey cannot be used for purposes of taxation, investigation, or regulation. Copies retained in your files are immune from legal process.

7) How should I account for mergers and acquisitions on the BE-185?

- a. If your company was acquired by a U.S. company, please complete pages one and two of the survey and in response to question number 8 include information on the U.S. company that will now report the information required by the BE-185 survey.*
- b. If your company was purchased by a foreign company, complete the survey as it pertains to you and go to www.bea.gov/surveys/fdiusurv.htm for information on foreign direct investment survey requirements.*
- c. If your company purchased another U.S. company, your BE-185 survey should consolidate their financial services transactions for the entire reporting period.*

8) The address and the contact person listed are no longer current. How do I update this information for the BE-185?

- a. Cross out the incorrect information at the top of the front page of the survey and write in the new address and contact name, or*
- b. You may call (202) 606-5588 and we will update this information for you.*

9) I believe I am exempt from filing data on Schedule A and/or B on the BE-185 survey. What do I do?

Complete pages 1-3 of the survey. If you do not check "yes" for questions 11 or 12 and you do not wish to report on a voluntary basis on Schedule A or B, then mail the form to the address on the first page.

10) Can I fax the completed BE-185 survey?

Yes, the fax number is (202) 606-5318. It is not necessary to address it to anyone's attention.

11) Can I e-mail my completed BE-185 survey?

We discourage reporters from sending their completed surveys via e-mail because of concerns about confidentiality. Your e-mail is not necessarily secure against interception by a third party.

12) How can I obtain a MS Excel (.xls format) version of the BE-185?

You can obtain a MS Excel version of the BE-185 by sending an email to be-185@bea.gov. This is an automated system, and it will automatically send you an .xls version.

13) Can I complete the BE-185 online?

Yes, you may file electronically at <http://www.bea.gov/efile>.

14) Do I need to submit a hard copy of the BE-185 form if I submit the form by fax or E-file?

No. A single submission, whether by mail, fax, or E-file, is sufficient.

15) We purchased services from a German company, but we sent the payments to a Swiss bank. How should we report this transaction on the BE-185?

Since your transaction was with a German entity, you should report this as a transaction with Germany. Where the money actually goes is irrelevant, even if you were to send your payments to a bank in the United States as a matter of convenience.

16) We provide services to a U.S. affiliate of a German company. Is this transaction applicable to the BE-185?

No. Your transaction is with a U.S. affiliate of that German company. This would be considered a domestic transaction and therefore not applicable to the BE-185.

17) Should I report on an accrual basis or cash basis on the BE-185?

Report purchases or sales in the periods when they occur or are charged (that is, in the period when the provider of the service recognizes or performs the service), whether expensed by the purchaser of the service in that accounting period, amortized over several accounting periods, or included in expenses in a subsequent accounting period.

18) Should I net payments against receipts on the BE-185?

No. Please report on a gross value basis. Receipts are reported on Schedule A and payments are reported on Schedule B of the BE-185 form.

19) When reporting data on the BE-185 by country, can regions be used instead?

No. We collect data by country, not by region.

20) How should transactions with international organizations be reported on the BE-185?

International organizations (such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund) are, according to balance of payments conventions, considered foreign entities, even if they are headquartered in the United States. Transactions with these organizations should be reported on the BE-185. Enter “Int’l Org” under “Other – Specify country” on Schedules A or B, and enter the data for each service type for which you had transactions.

21) How should I round receipts/payments data on the BE-185?

Report data in U.S. dollars rounded to thousands (omitting 000). For example \$1,455,328 should be reported as 1,455 and \$2,328,596 should be reported as 2,329. Amounts less than \$500 round to 0 and should, therefore, be omitted.

22) How do I indicate on the BE-185 what types of financial services I am selling/purchasing?

On page three of the survey, each type of service covered by the survey has a number corresponding to it (for example, brokerage services related to equity transactions are reported under service code 1). If you sold brokerage services related to equity transactions, in the space provided below “Service Code” on Schedule A, you would enter service code 1 for brokerage services related to equity transactions. If you check the “yes” box in Step 2, then enter the service code associated with that service on Schedule A (U.S. Reporter’s Sales of Financial Services to Foreign Persons). If you check the “yes” box in Step 3, then enter the service code associated with that service on Schedule B (U.S. Reporter’s Purchases of Financial Services from Foreign Persons). If you have more types of services than columns provided, simply report them on the overflow sheets provided.

23) I have transactions with countries that are not listed on the BE-185. Should I include those on the survey?

Yes, include services transactions that you have with all countries (even those that are not listed on the form). Write in the names of the countries on the lines below where it says “Other-Specify.” If you run out of space, use the overflow sheets provided or write the data on a separate sheet of paper, making sure that you list the proper service type with the proper country.

24) My company purchased financial management services from three countries: \$5 million from Norway, \$5 million from the United Kingdom, and \$4 million from Venezuela (totaling \$14 million). How should I report the data on the BE-185?

You have a few options. You could report this data on Schedule B under service code 4, financial management services, and list the country detail. Because the total purchases of this particular type of service totaled less than \$15 million, you have a

second option of reporting this data on Schedule B under service code 4, financial management services, without the country detail and reporting the total purchases of financial management services on line 29. Finally, you have the option of not reporting these transactions.

25) Should I report all financial services not otherwise listed on the BE-185?

No. Only report those financial services listed on the survey. Please see Section IV, Services Covered, of the general instructions for the list of services covered on this survey.

26) We receive interest payments from a foreign corporation. Do we report the interest received under credit-related services on the BE-185?

No. Interest is not a financial services transaction covered by the survey. Please see Section V, Type of Financial Services Excluded From Coverage, of the general instructions for financial services not covered by the BE-185.

27) Can we use estimates when filing on the BE-185?

Estimates are allowed to be used if actual data are not available and estimates are labeled as such.